

THE
THEATRE:
OR,
SELECT WORKS
OF THE
British Dramatic Poets.
IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

To which are prefixed,
The LIVES of these celebrated WRITERS,
AND
STRICTURES ON Most of the PLAYS.

VOLUME the THIRD.

CONTAINING
HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK. A TRAGEDY.
TENCRED AND SIGISMUNDA. A TRAGEDY.
THE PROVOK'D HUSBAND. A COMEDY.
THE MISER. A COMEDY.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by and for MARTIN & WOTHERSTON.

M. DCC. LXVIII.



H A M L E T,

PRINCE of DENMARK.

A

T R A G E D Y.

B Y

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

EDINBURGH:

Printed by and for MARTIN & WOTHERSPOON;

M. DCC. LXVIII.

H. A. M. E. T.

THIRD EDITION

1840



Dramatis Personæ.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

FÖRTIBNRAS, Prince of Norway.

HAMLET, son to the former, and nephew to the present King.

POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.

HORATIO, friend to Hamlet.

LAERTES, son to Polonius.

VOLTIMAND,	}	Courtiers.
CORNELIUS,		
ROSINCRANTZ,		
GUILDENSTERN,		

OSRICK, a fop.

MARCELLUS, an officer.

BERNARDO,	}	two soldiers.
FRANCISCO,		

REYNOLDO, servant to Polonius.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.

OPHELIA, daughter to Polonius, beloved by Hamlet.

Ladies attending on the Queen.

Players, grave-makers, sailors, messengers, and other attendants.

SCENE, *ELSINÖÖR*.



H A M L E T.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

A Platform before the palace.

Enter BERNARDO and FRANCISCO, two centinels.

BARNARDO.

W H O's there ?

Fran. Nay, answer me : stand, and unfold
yourself.

Ber. Long live the King !

Fran. Bernardo ?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve ; get thee to bed, Fran-
cisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks : 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had a quiet guard ?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho ! who's there ?

Hor. Friends to this ground,

8 H A M L E T, Act I.

Mar. And liege-men to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. Oh, farewell, honest soldier ; who hath reliev'd
you ?

Fran. Bernardo has my place : give you good night.

[*Exit Francisco.*]

Mar. Holla ! Bernardo——

Ber. Say, what, is Horatio there ?

Hor. A piece of him. [Giving his hand.]

Ber. Welcome, Horatio ; welcome, good Marcellus.

Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night ?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our phantasy ;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us ;
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us, to watch the minutes of this night ;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush ! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down a while,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course t' illumine that part of heav'n
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one——

Mar. Peace, break thee off.

Enter the GHOST.

Look where it comes again.

Ber. In the same figure like the King that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar ; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the King ? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like ; it harrows me with fear and wonder,



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Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the Majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometime march? By Heav'n, I charge thee speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; I charge thee, speak.

[Exit Ghost.]

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble and look pale.
Is not this something more than phantasy?
What think you of it?

Hor. Before my God I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and try'd avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on,
When he th' ambitious Norway combated:
So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle
He smote the fleeced Polack on the ice.

'Tis strange——

Mar. Thus twice before, and just at this dead hour,
With martial stalk, he hath gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work, I know
not;

But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subjects of the land?
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war?
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week?
What might me toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint labourer with the day?

Who is't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last King,
Whose image but even now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
(Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride),
Dar'd to the fight: in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law of heraldry,
Did forfeit (with his life) all those his lands
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Against the which a moiety competent
Was 'gaged by our King; which had return
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as by the same comart,
A d carriage of the articles design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't: which is no other,
As it doth well appear unto our state,
But to recover of us by strong hand,
And terms compulsitory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch, and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other, but even so.
Well may it fort, that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch so like the King,
That was, and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless; the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;

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Stars shone with trains of fire, dews of blood fell;
 Disasters veil'd the sun; and the moist star,
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
 And even the like precourſe of fierce events,
 As harbingers preceding ſtill the fates,
 And prologue to the omen coming on,
 Have heav'n and earth together demonſtrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.

Enter GHOST again.

But ſoft, behold! lo, where it comes again!
 I'll croſs it though it blaſt me. Stay, illuſion!

[preading his arms.]

If thou haſt any ſound, or uſe of voice,
 Speak to me.

If there be any good thing to be done,
 That may to thee do eaſe, and grace to me;
 Speak to me.

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which, happily foreknowing may avoid,
 Oh ſpeak!——

Or if thou haſt uphoarded, in thy life,
 Extorted treaſure, in the womb of earth, *[Cock crows.]*
 For which, they ſay, you ſpirits oft walk in death,
 Speak of it Stay, and ſpeak—Stop it Marcellus.—

Mar. Shall I ſtrike at it with my partiſan?

Hor. Do. if it will not ſtand.

Ben. 'Tis here——

Hor. 'Tis here——

Mar. 'Tis gone.

[Exit Ghost.]

We do it wrong, being ſo majeſtical,
 To offer it the ſhew of violence;
 For it is as the air, invulnerable;
 And our vain blows, malicious mockery.

Ben. It was about to ſpeak when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it ſtarted like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful ſummons. I have heard,
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day; and at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine: and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 The bird of dawning singeth all night long:
 And then they say no spirit walks abroad;
 The nights are wholesome, then no planet strikes,
 No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm;
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
 But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.
 Break we our watch up, and, by my advice,
 Let us impart what we have seen to-night
 Unto young Hamlet. For, upon my life,
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
 Do you consent, we shall acquaint him with it,
 As needful in our loves, fitting our duty.

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
 Where we shall find him most conveniently. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

Changes to the Palace.

Enter CLAUDIUS *King of Denmark, GERTRUDE the Queen, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
 The memory be green, and that it fitted
 To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
 To be contracted in one brow of woe;
 Yet so far hath Discretion fought with Nature,

That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,
Th' imperial jointress of this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
Taken to wife.—Nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along : (for all, our thanks) :
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth ;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint, and out of frame ;
Collegued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of these lands
Lost by his father, by all bands of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.—
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting :
This much the business is. We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,
(Who, impotent, and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose), to suppress
His further gate herein ; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions are all made
Out of his subjects : and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the King. more than the scope
Which these dilated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Vol. In that, and all things will we shew our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing ; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Vol. and Corn.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?

You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes ?

VOL. III.

B

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
 The blood is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than to the throne of Denmark is thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread Lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France;
 From whence, though willingly, I came to Denmark
 To shew my duty in your coronation;
 Yet now I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again tow'rd France,
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? what says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my Lord, by laboursome petition,
 Wrung from me my slow leave; and, at the last,
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes, time be thine;
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will.
 But now, my Cousin Hamlet.—Kind my son——

Ham. A little more than kin, and less than kind.

[*Aside.*

King. How is it that the cloud still hangs on you?

Ham. Not so, my Lord, I am too much i' th' sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
 Do not for ever, with thy veiled lids,
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
 Thou know'st 'tis common; all that live must die;
 Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, Madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
 Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, Madam? nay, it is; I know not, *seems*:
 'Tis not alone my inked cloak, good mother,
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
 Nor the dejected 'haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, moods, shews of grief,
 That can denote me truly. These indeed *seem*,
 For they are actions that a man might play;
 But I have that within which passeth shew:
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
 Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:
 But you must know, your father lost a father;
 That father, his; and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation, for some term,
 To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere
 In obstinate condolment, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness, unmanly grief;
 It shews a will most incorrect to Heav'n,
 A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
 An understanding simple, and unschool'd:
 For what we know must be, and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
 Take it to heart? Fy! 'tis a fault to Heav'n,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to Nature,
 To Reason most absurd; whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cry'd
 From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
 This must be so. We pray you throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us
 As of a father: for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
 And with no less nobility of love,
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 Do I impart to you. For your intent
 In going back to school to Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire:
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,

Our chieftest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :
I pr'ythee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, Madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply ;
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;
And the King's rowse the heav'n shall bruit again,
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come, away. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

Manet HAMLET.

Ham. O that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His cannon 'gainst self-slaughter ! Oh God ! oh God !
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world !
Fy on't ! oh fy ! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed ; things rank, and gross in nature,
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
But two months dead ! nay, not so much ; not two ;—
So excellent a King, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr : so loving to my mother,
That he permitted not the winds of heav'n
Visit her face too roughly. Heav'n and earth !
Must I remember—why, she would hang on him,
As if encrease of appetite had grown
By what it fed on : yet, within a month——
Let me not think——Frailty, thy name is *Woman* !
A little month ! or e'er those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears——Why, she, ev'n she——
(O Heav'n ! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer)——married with mine
uncle,

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My father's brother ; but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month !——
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her gauled eyes,
She married.——Oh, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets !
It is not, nor it cannot come to good
But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

S C E N E IV.

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, and MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your Lordship !

Ham. I am glad to see you well :

Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my Lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name
with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?

Marcellus !

Mar. My good Lord——

Ham. I am very glad to see you ; good morning, Sir.
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my Lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so ;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it trust of your own report
Against yourself. I know you are no truant ;
But what is your affair in Elsinoor ?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My Lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pr'ythee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my Lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ; the funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would I had met my dearest foe in heav'n,
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !
My father——methinks I see my father.

Hor. Oh, where, my Lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king:

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My Lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?—

Hor. My Lord, the King your father.

Ham. The King my father!

Hor. Season your admiration but a while,
With an attentive ear; till I deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For Heaven's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encountred: a figure like your father,
Arm'd at all points exactly, *cap-a-pie*,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them; thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they (distill'd
Almost to jelly with th' effect of fear)
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch;
Where, as they had deliver'd both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes. I knew your father:
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Hor. My Lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My Lord, I did;

But answer made it none. Yet once methought
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak:
But even then the morning cock crew loud;

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd Lord, 'tis true ;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, Sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night ?

Both. We do, my Lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

Both. Arm'd, my Lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

Both. My Lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face ?

Hor. Oh, yes, my Lord ; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly ?

Hor. A count'nance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there !

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like. Staid it long ?

Hor. While one, with moderate haste, might tell a
hundred.

Both. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grissled ? no.

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I'll watch to-night ; perchance 'twill walk
again.

Hor. I warrant you, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be ten'ble in your silence still ;

And whatsoever shall befall to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves : so fare ye well.
Upon the platform 'twixt eleven and twelve
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your Honour. [*Exeunt.*]

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.
My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well.
I doubt some foul play : 'would the night were come !
Till then, sit down, my soul : foul deeds will rise
(Tho' all the earth o'erwhelm them) to men's eyes
[*Exit.*]

S C E N E V.

Changes to an Apartment in Polonius's house.

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.

Laer. My necessities are embark'd, farewell ;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistance, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature ;
Forward, not permanent ; tho' sweet, not lasting ;
The perfume, and suppliance of a minute ;
No more——

Oph. No more but so ?

Laer. Think it no more :
For Nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now ;
And now no foil of cautel doth besmerch
The virtue of his will : but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own ;

For he himself is subject to his birth.
 He may not, as unvalued persons do,
 Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
 The safety and the health of the whole state;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof he's head. Then, if he says he loves you,
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
 As he in his peculiar act and place
 May give his saying deed; which is no further,
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent ear you list his songs;
 Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd importunity.
 Fear it. Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
 And keep within the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes;
 The canker galls the infant of the spring,
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most eminent.
 Be wary then, best safety lies in fear;
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall th' effects of this good lesson keep,
 As watchmen to my heart. But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Shew me the steep and thorny way to heav'n;
 Whilst he, a puffed and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
 And recks not his own read.

Laer. Oh, fear me not.

S C E N E VI.

Enter POLONIUS.

I stay too long; — but here my father comes.
A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! abroad, abroad for shame;
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are staid for. There, my blessing with you;
[Laying his hand on Laertes's head.]

And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar;
The friends thou hast, and their adoption try'd,
Crapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel:
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel: but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear; but few thy voice.
Take each man's censure; but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
And they in France of the best rank and station
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all; to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the light the day,
'Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell, my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly I do take my leave, my Lord.

Pol. The time invests you; go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
What I have said.

Oph. 'Tis in my mem'ry lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell

[Exit *Laer.*

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought!

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution), I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my Lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection! puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my Lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en his tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wringing it thus) you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My Lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call't: go to, go to.

Oph. And hath giv'n count'nance to his speech, my Lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heav'n.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, oh my daughter,
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in the promise as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden-presence,

Set your intraitments at a higher rate,
 Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
 Believe so much in him, that he is young;
 And with a larger teher he may walk,
 Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
 Not of that dye which their investments shew,
 But mere implorers of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bauds,
 The better to beguile. This is for all:
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you to slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words to talk to the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you. Come your way.

Oph. I shall obey, my Lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VII.

Changes to a Platform before the Palace.

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. I heard it not; it then draws near the season
 Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*Noise of warlike music within.*]

What does this mean, my Lord?

Ham. The King doth walk to-night, and takes his
 rouse,

Keeps wassel, and the swagg'ring up-spring reels;
 And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
 The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry is't.

But, to my mind, though I am native here,

And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.

Enter GHOST.

Hor. Look, my Lord, it comes !

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us !
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
Bringst with thee airs from heav'n, or blasts from hell,
Be thy advent wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane : oh ! answer me ;
Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in earth,
Have burst their cearments ? why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again ? What may this mean ?
That thou, dead corse, again, in compleat steel,
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and us fools of nature
So horribly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?
Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[Ghost beckons to Hamlet.]

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
Te you alone.

Mar. Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means. *[Holding Hamlet.]*

Ham. It will not speak ; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my Lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ;
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?
It waves me forth again.——I'll follow it——

Hor. What if it tempt you tow'rd the flood, my Lord?
 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
 That beetles o'er its base into the sea;
 And there assume some other horrible form,
 Which might deprave your sov'reignty of reason,
 And draw you into madness? think of it.
 The very place puts toys of desperation,
 Without more motive, into every brain,
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea;
 And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still: go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my Lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Mar. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
 And makes each petty artery in this body
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
 Still am I call'd: unhand me, Gentlemen——

[*Breaking from them.*]

By Heav'n I'll make a ghost of him that holds me—
 I say, away——go on——I'll follow thee——

[*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*]

Hor. He waxes desp'rate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow, 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after.—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E VIII.

Changes to a more remote part of the Platform.

Re-enter GHOST and HAMLET.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor Ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And, for the day, confin'd too fast in fires;
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon may not be
To ears of flesh and blood; list, list, oh list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love——

Ham. O Heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it, that I, with wings as
swift

As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be, than the fat weed
That roots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf,
Would thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. So, the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death

Rankly abus'd : but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. Oh, my prophetic soul ! my uncle ?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with trait'rous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts that have the power
So to seduce !) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen.
Oh Hamlet, what a falling off was there !
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand ev'n with the vow
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !

But Virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven ;
So Lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will fate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage——

But, soft ! methinks I scent the morning air——
Brief let me be : sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole
With juice of curfed hebenon in a phial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment ; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That swift as quick-silver it courses through
The nat'ral gates and alleys of the body ;
And with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine,
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar like, with vile and loathsome crust
All my smooth body.——

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd ;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,

Unhousel'd, unanointed, unaneal'd :
 No reck'ning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head.
 Oh horrible ! oh horrible ! most horrible !
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
 Against thy mother's ought ; leave her to Heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.
 Adieu, adieu, adieu : remember me.

[Exit.]

Ham. Oh, all you host of heav'n ! oh earth ! what else ?
 And shall I couple hell ? oh fy ! hold my heart :
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old ;
 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee !
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe ; remember thee !
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
 That youth and observation copied there ;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by Heav'n ;
 Oh, most pernicious woman !
 Oh villain, villain, smiling damned villain !
 My tables, — meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;
 At least, I'm sure it may be so in Denmark. [Writing.]
 So, uncle, there you are ; now to my word ;
 It is, Adieu, adieu, remember me :
 I've sworn it —

S C E N E IX.

*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.**Hor.* My Lord, my Lord,——*Mar.* Lord Hamlet,——*Hor.* Heav'n secure him!*Mar.* So be it.*Hor.* Illo, ho, ho, my Lord!*Ham.* Hillo, ho, ho, boy; come, bird, come.*Mar.* How is't, my noble Lord?*Hor.* What news, my Lord?*Ham.* Oh, wonderful!*Hor.* Good my Lord, tell it.*Ham.* No, you'll reveal it.*Hor.* Not I, my Lord, by Heav'n.*Mar.* Nor I, my Lord.*Ham.* How say you then, would heart of man once think it?

But you'll be secret——

Both. Ay, by Heav'n, my Lord.*Ham.* There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
But he's an arrant knave.*Hor.* There needs no ghost, my Lord, come from
the grave

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right, you are i' th' right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands, and part;
You, as your business and desires shall point you;
(For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is); and, for my own poor part,
I will go pray.*Hor.* These are but wild and whurling words, my
Lord.*Ham.* I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, heartily.*Hor.* There's no offence, my Lord.*Ham.* Yes, by St Patrick, but there is, my Lord;
And much offence too, Touching this vision here——

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you :
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my Lord?

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Both. My Lord, we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear't

Hor. In faith, my Lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my Lord, in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my Lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. Swear. [*Ghost cries under the stage.*]

Ham. Ah ha, boy, say'st thou so? art thou there,
true-penny?

Come on, you hear this fellow in the cellaridge.

Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my Lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, Gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword.
Never to speak of this which you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole; can'st work i' th' ground
so fast?

A worthy pioneer! Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. Oh day and night! but this is wondrous strange.

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

There are more things in heav'n and earth, Horatio,
Than are dream'd of in your philosophy. But come,
Here, as before, never, (so help you mercy!),
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,
(As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on),
 That you, at such time seeing me, never shall,
 With arms incumbred thus, or this head-shake,
 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
 As, Well—we know ;—or, We could, and, If we
 would ;—

Or, If we list to speak ;—or, There be, and if there
 might—

(Or such ambiguous givings out), denote
 That you know aught of me ; this do ye swear,
 So grace and mercy at your most need help you !
 Swear.

Ghost. Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit. So, Gentlemen,
 With all my love do I commend me to you ;
 And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
 May do t' express his love and friending to you,
 God willing, shall not lack : let us go in together,
 And still your fingers on your lips, I pray :
 The time is out of joint ; oh, cursed spight !
 That ever I was born to set it right.
 Nay, come, let us go together.

[*Exeunt.*]

A C T II. S C E N E I.

An Apartment in Polonius's House.

Enter POLONIUS and REYNOLDO.

POLONIUS.

GIVE him this money, and these notes, Reynoldo.

Rey. I will, my Lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynoldo,
 Before you visit him, to make enquiry
 Of his behaviour.

Rey. My Lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said ; very well said. Look you,
 Sir,

Inquire me first what Danfers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expence; and finding,
By this incompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more near;
Then your particular demands will touch it;
Take you as 'twere some distant knowledge of him,
As thus—I know his father and his friends,
And, in part, him.—Do you mark this, Reynoldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my Lord.

Pol. And, in part, him—but, you may say—Not well;
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank,
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, Sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my Lord—

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing.—You may go so far.

Rey. My Lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no, as you may season it in the charge;
You must not put an utter scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency,
That's not my meaning; but breathe his faults so
quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood
Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good Lord—

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, ay, my Lord, I would know that.

Pol. Marry, Sir, here's my drift;
And I believe it is a fetch of wit.
You laying these slight follies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little foil'd i' th' working,
Mark you, your party in converse, he you would sound,

Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes,
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;
Good Sir, or Sire, or Friend, or Gentleman,
(According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country).

Rey. Very good, my Lord.

Pol. And then, Sir, does he this:

He does,———what was I about to say?

I was about to say something—where did I leave?——

Rey. At 'closes in the consequence.'

Pol. At closes in the consequence——Ay, marry.

He closes thus:——I know the gentleman,

I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,

Or then, with such and such; and, as you say,

There was he gaming, there o'ertook in's rowse,

There falling out at tennis; or, perchance,

I saw him enter such a house of sale,

Videlicet, a brothel, or so, forsooth.——See you now;

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlances, and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out:

So by my former lecture and advice

Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Rey. My Lord, I have.

Pol. God b' wi' you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my Lord——

Pol. Observe his inclination ev'n yourself.

Rey. I shall, my Lord.

Pol. And let him play his music.

Rey. Well, my Lord.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

Enter OPHELIA.

Pol. Farewell. How now, Ophelia, what's the matter?

Oph. Alas, my Lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of Heav'n?

Oph. My Lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,
No hat upon his head, his stockings loose,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyred to his ancle;
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors; thus he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My Lord, I do not know;
But truly I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And with his other hand, thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long time itaid he so;
At last a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He rais'd a sigh, so piteous and profound,
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
And end his being. Then he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their help,
And to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me, I will go seek the King;
This is the very ecstasy of love;
Whose violent property foregoes itself,
And leads the will to desp'rate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heav'n,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry;
What, have you giv'n him any hard words of late?

Pol. No, my good Lord; but as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and deny'd
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I'm sorry, that with better speed and judgment

I had not noted him. I fear'd he trifled,
And meant to wreck thee: but beshrew my jealousy;
It seems it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come; go we to the King.
This must be known; which, being kept close, might
move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

Changes to the Palace.

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSINCRANTZ, GUILDEN-
STERN, *Lords, and other Attendants.*

King. Welcome, dear Rosincrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover, that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something you have heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since not th' exterior, nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What should it be
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from th' understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That being of so young days brought up with him,
And since so neighbour'd to his youth and 'haviour,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather,
So much as from occasions you may glean,
If ought to us unknown afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lyes within our remedy.

Queen Good Gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And sure I am, two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To shew us so much gentry and good-will,
As to extend your time with us a while,

For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your visitation shall receive such thanks,
As fits a King's remembrance.

Ros. Both your Majesties
Might by the sov'reign power you have of us
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
To lay our service freely at your feet.

King. Thanks, Rosincrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosincrantz.
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of ye,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heav'n's make our presence and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him! [*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*]

Queen. Amen.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Th' ambassadors from Norway, my good Lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my Lord? assure you, my good Liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious King;
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As I have us'd to do), that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. Oh, speak of that, that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to th' ambassadors:
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit Pol.*]

He tells me, my sweet Queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main,
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

S C E N E IV.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND, *and* CORNELIUS.

King. Well, we shall list him.—Welcome, my good friends !

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway ?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings and desires.

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack :
But, better look'd into, he truly found,
It was against your Highness : whereat griev'd,
That so his sickness, age, and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrest,
On Fortinbras ; which he, in brief, obeys ;
Receives rebuke from Norway ; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give th' assay of arms against your Majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee ;
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polock :
With an entreaty, herein further shewn,
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well ;

And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.

Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour :

Go to your rest ; at night we'll feast together.

Most welcome home !

[*Exit Ambaf.*]

Pol. This business is well ended.

My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,

Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity's the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: your noble son is mad.
Mad, call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.——

Queen. More matter with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all:——
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true; a foolish figure;
But farewell it; for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect, defective, comes by cause;
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.——*Per-*
pend.——

I have a daughter; have, whilst she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath giv'n me this; now gather, and surmise.

He opens a letter and reads.

*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified
Ophelia.*—That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase: *beautified*
is a vile phrase; but you shall hear—*These to her
excellent white bosom, these.*——

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good Madam, stay a while, I will be faithful.

Doubt thou the stars are fire; [Reading.

Doubt that the sun doth move;

Doubt truth to be a liar,

But never doubt I love.

*Oh, dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not
art to reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, oh
most best, believe it.* Adieu.

*Thine evermore, most dear Lady, whilst
this machine is to him, HAMLET.*

This in obedience hath my daughter shewn me ;
 And, more above, hath his sollicitings,
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
 All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she receiv'd his love ?

Pol. What do you think of me ?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think ?

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
 (As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
 Before my daughter told me), what might you,
 Or my dear Majesty your Queen here, think ?
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
 Or giv'n my heart a working mute and dumb,
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ;
 What might you think ? no, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak ;
 Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere,
 'This must not be ; and then I precepts gave her,
 'That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens :
 Which done, see to the fruits of my device ;
 For, he repulsed, a short tale to make,
 Fell to a sadness, then into a fast,
 Thence to a watching, thence into a weakness,
 Thence to a lightness ; and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we wail for.

King. Do you think this ?

Queen. It may be very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, I'd fain know that,
 That I have positively said, 'tis so,
 When it prov'd otherwise ?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise.

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre.

Act II. PRINCE of DENMARK. 41

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks for hours together,
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him;
Be you and I behind an arras then,
Mark the encounter; if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm and carters.

King. We will try it.

S C E N E V.

Enter HAMLET reading.

Queen. But look where, sadly, the poor wretch comes
reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away.
I'll board him presently. [*Exeunt King and Queen.*]
Oh, give me leave.——How does my good Lord
Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God o'mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my Lord?

Ham. Excellent well, you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my Lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir; to be honest as this world goes, is
to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my Lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
Being a god, kissing carrion——
Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my Lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' th' sun; conception is a
blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive.
Friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that? still harping on my
daughter!——
Yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger.

He is far gone ; and, truly, in my youth, [Aside.
 I suffer'd much extremity for love ;
 Very near this. — I'll speak to him again.

What do you read, my Lord ?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my Lord ?

Ham. Between whom ?

Pol. I mean the matter that you read, my Lord.

Ham. Slanders, Sir : for the satyrical slave says here, that old men have grey beards ; that their faces are wrinkled ; their eyes purging thick amber, and plumtree gum ; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit ; together with most weak hams. All which, Sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honestly to have it thus set down ; for yourself, Sir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in't. Will you walk out of the air, my Lord ?

Ham. Into my grave. —

Pol. Indeed that is out o' th' air : —

How pregnant (sometimes) his replies are ?
 A happiness that often madness hits on,
 Which sanity and reason could not be
 So prosp'rously deliver'd of. I'll leave him,
 And suddenly contrive the means of meeting
 Between him and my daughter.
 My honourable Lord, I will most humbly
 Take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, Sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my Lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools !

Pol. You go to seek Lord Hamlet ; there he is. [Exit.

S C E N E VI.

Enter ROSINCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. God save you, Sir !

Guil. Mine honour'd Lord !

Ros. My most dear Lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou,
Güldenstern?

Oh, Rosincrantz, good lads! how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Gül. Happy, in that we are not over-happy; on
Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my Lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the mid-
dle of her favours?

Gül. 'Faith, in her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of Fortune? oh, most true;
she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my Lord; but that the world's grown
honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near; but your news is
not true. Let me question more in particular. What
have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of
Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Gül. Prison, my Lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one, in which there are many con-
fines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of
th' worst.

Ros. We think not so, my Lord.

Ham. Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is no-
thing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
To me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one: 'tis
too narrow for your mind.

Ham. Oh God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell,
and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not
that I have bad dreams

Gül. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the
very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow
of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Rof. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows. Shall we to th' court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Both. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter. I will not fort you with the rest of my servants: for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended; but, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinoor?

Rof. To visit you, my Lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear of a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? is it your own inclining? is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me; come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my Lord?

Ham. Any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you.

Rof. To what end, my Lord?

Ham. That you must teach me; but let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no?

Rof. What say you?

[To Guild.

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you: if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My Lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy;

the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world, the paragon of animals; and yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me, nor woman neither; though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My Lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh, when I said man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my Lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you. We accosted them on the way, and hinder are they coming to offer you their service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it they travel? their residence both in reputation and profit was better, both ways.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? are they so follow'd?

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but there is, Sir, an aeiry of children, little eyases; that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannical

nically clapt for't. These are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them), that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come hither.

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains 'em? how are they escorted? will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players? (as it is most like, if their means are no better); their writers do them wrong to make them exclaim against their own succession.

Rof. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them on to controversy. There was for a while no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is't possible?

Guil. Oh, there has been much throwing about of brains

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Rof. Ay, that they do, my Lord, Hercules and his load too.

Ham. It is not strange; for mine uncle is King of Denmark; and those that would make mowes at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats, apiece, for his picture in little. There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it.

[Flourish for the players.]

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinoor; your hands: come then, the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players (which, I tell you, must shew fairly outward) should appear more like entertainment than yours. You are welcome; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

Guil. In what, my dear Lord?

Ham. I am but mad north, north-west; when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw.

S C E N E VII.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. Well be with you, Gentlemen.

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern, and you too, at each ear a hearer; that great baby you see there, is not yet out of his swathing-clouts.

Ros. Haply he's the second time come to them; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it;—you say right, Sir; for on Monday morning 'twas so indeed.

Pol. My Lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My Lord, I have news to tell you.
When Roscius was an actor in Rome——

Pol. The actors are come hither, my Lord.

Ham. Buzze, buzze——

Pol. Upon mine honour——

Ham. *Then came each actor on his ass.*——

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of wit, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. *Oh, Jephthah, judge of Israel*, what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my Lord?

Ham. *Why, one fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.*

Pol. Still on my daughter.

Ham. Am I not i' th' right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my Lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my Lord?

Ham. *Why, as by lot, God wot*—and then you know, it came to pass, as most like it was; the first row of the

rubric will shew you more. For look where my abridgements come.

Enter four or five players.

Y'are welcome, masters, welcome all. I am glad to see thee well; welcome, good friends. Oh! old friend! thy face is valant'd since I saw thee last; com'st thou to heard me in Denmark? What! my young lady and mistress? b'rlady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chioppine. Pray God your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome: we'll e'en to't like friendly faulconers, fly at any thing we see; we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 Play What speech, my good Lord?

Him I heard thee speak me a speech once; but it was never acted: or if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million. 'Twas Caviar to the general: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgment in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cuaning. I remember one said, there was 'no salt in the lines, to make the matter savoury: nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affectation; but call'd it an honest method. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd; 'twas Æneas's tale to Dido; and thereabout especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line. let me see, let me see——
The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast, ——It is not so; ——it begins with Pyrrhus.

The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose fable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse;
Hath now his dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal: head to foot,
Now is he total gules; horridly trick'd

With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impast'd with the parching fires,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To murders vile. Roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.

Hol. 'Fore God, my Lord, well spoken, with good
accent, and good discretion.

1 Play. Anon he finds him,
Striking, too short, at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lyes where it falls,
Repugnant to command; unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide;
But with the whif and wind of his fell sword
Th' unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear. For lo, his sword,
Which was declining on the milky head
Of rev'rend Priam, seem'd i' th' air to stick;
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.

But as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heav'ns, the rack stand still,
The bold wind speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death; anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region: so after Pyrrhus' pause,
A rous'd vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars his armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune! all you gods,
In general synod take away her power:
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heav'n,
As low as to the fiends.

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to th' barber's with your beard. Pr'ythee, say on; he's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on, come to Hecuba.

1 Play. But who, oh! who had seen the mobled queen——

Ham. The mobled queen?

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 Play. Run bare-foot up and down, threatening the flames

With biffon rheum; a clout upon that head,
Where late the diadem stood; and for a robe
About her lank, and all-o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket in th' alarm of fear caught up:
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd.
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all),
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heav'n,
And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look whe'r he has not chang'd his colour, and has tears in his eyes. Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well, I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon. Good my Lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do ye hear, let them be well us'd; for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you liv'd.

Pol. My Lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. God's bodikins, man, much better. Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? use them after your own honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, Sirs,

[Exit Polonius,

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Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow. Dost thou hear me, old friend, can you play the murder of Gonzago?

Play. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could ye not?

Play. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that Lord, and look you mock him not. My good friends, I'll leave you till night; you are welcome to Elsinoor.

Ros. Good my Lord.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VIII.

Manet HAMLET.

Ham. Ay, so, God b' w' ye: now I am alone.
Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I?
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working, all his visage wan'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting,
With forms, to his conceit; and all for nothing?
For Hecuba?
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the gen'ral ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free;
Confound the ign'rant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculty of eyes and ears.—Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing,—no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?

Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face ;
Tweaks me by th' nose, gives me the lie i' th' throat,
As deep as to the lungs ? who does me this ?
Ha ! why, should I take it — for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter ; or ere this
I should have fated all the region-kites
With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain !
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain !
Why, what an ass am I ! this is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heav'n and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing like a very drab —
A scullion, — fy upon't ! fo ! — about, my brain ! —
I've heard, that guilky creatures, at a play,
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions.
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father,
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks ;
I'll tent him to the quick ; if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen,
May be the devil ; and the devil hath power
T' assume a pleasing shape ; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits),
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this : the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King. [Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Palace.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSSINCANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Lords.

KING.

AND can you by no drift of conference
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet,
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Most free of question, but of our demands
Niggard in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him to any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-rode on the way; of these we told him:
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: they are about the court;
And (as I think) they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:

And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With my heart, and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd.

Good Gentleman, give him a further edge;
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my Lord.

[*Exeunt.*

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia. Her father, and myself,
Will so bestow ourselves that seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge ;
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.

And for my part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness : so shall I hope your virtues
May bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit Queen.*

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here—Gracious, so please ye,
We will bestow ourselves—Read on this book :
'That shew of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We're oft to blame in this,
'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. Oh, 'tis too true.

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience !
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word. [*Aside.*
Oh heavy burden !

Pol. I hear him coming ; let's withdraw, my Lord.

[*Exeunt all but Ophelia.*

S C E N E II.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. To be, or not to be * ? that is the question.—

* Of this celebrated soliloquy, which, bursting from a man
distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune ;
Or to take arms against a fall of troubles,
And by opposing end them ?—To die,—to sleep—
No more ; and by a sleep, to say, we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to ; 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die—to sleep—
To sleep ? perchance to dream ; ay, there's the rub—
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.—There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of th' time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to shew how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner : *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress, it is necessary to decide, whether, after our present state, we are to be or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine, whether 'tis nobler, and more suitable to the dignity of reason, to suffer the outrages of fortune patiently, or to take arms against them, and by opposing end them, though perhaps with the loss of life. If to die were to sleep, no more, and by a sleep to end the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were devoutly to be wished ; but if to sleep in death, be to dream, to retain our powers of sensibility, we must pause to consider, in that sleep of death what dreams may come. This consideration makes calamity so long endured ; for who would bear the vexations of life, which might be ended by a bare broken, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity ? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon this regard, chills the ardour of resolution, checks the vigour of enterprise, and makes the current of desire stagnate in inactivity.*

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia
Johnson.

The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of th' unworthy takes;
 When he himself might his *quietus* make
 With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
 To grone and sweat under a weary life;
 But that the dread of something after death
 (That undiscover'd country, from whose bourne
 No traveller returns) puzzles the will;
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all:
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
 And enterprises of great pith and moment,
 With this regard their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action—Soft you, now!

[Seeing Oph.

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remembered.

Oph. Good my Lord,

How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you, well.

Oph. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longed long to re-deliver:
 I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd Lord, you know right well you
 did;

And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd,
 As made the things more rich: that perfume lost,
 Take these again; for to the noble mind
 Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
 There, my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My Lord ———

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your Lordship?

Ham. That, if you be honest and fair, you should
 admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my Lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is, to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into its likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. — I did love thee once.

Oph. Indeed, my Lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me. For virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it. I lov'd you not.

Oph. I was the more deceiv'd.

Oph.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery. Why shouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better my mother had not born me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in name, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between heav'n and earth? we are arrant knaves, believe none of us—Go thy ways to a nunnery—Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my Lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O help him, you sweet heavens!

you

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry. Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.—Get thee to a nunnery.—Farewell—Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them—To a nunnery, go—and quickly too: farewell.

Oph. Heav'nly powers, restore him!

ould

Ham. I have heard of your painting too well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't, it hath made me

mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

[Exit Hamlet.

Oph. Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword!
Th' expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,
Th' observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!
I am of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows:
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled out of tune, and harsh;
That unmatch'd form, and feature of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy. Oh, woe is me,
T' have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

S C E N E III.

Enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spoke, tho' it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. Something's in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger, which, how to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well. But yet do I believe,
The origin and commencement of this grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia?—
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said,
We heard it all.—My Lord, do as you please;

[Exit Ophelia.

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But if you hold it fit, after the play
 Let his Queen-mother all alone intreat him
 To shew his griefs; let her be round with him:
 And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
 Of all their conf'rence. If she find him not,
 To England send him; or confine him, where
 Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter HAMLET, and two or three of the Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced
 it to you, trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth
 it, as many of our players do, I had as lieve the town
 crier had spoke my lines. And do not saw the air too
 much with your hand thus, but use all gently; for in the
 very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, whirlwind of
 your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance
 that may give it smoothness. Oh, it offends me to the
 soul, to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a
 passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the
 groundlings; who (for the most part) are capable of
 nothing, but inexplicable dumb shews and noise: I
 could have such a fellow whipp'd for o'erdoing Ger-
 magant; it out-herods Herod. Pray you avoid it.

Play. I warrant your Honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither; but let your own dis-
 cretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the
 word to the action, with this special observance, that
 you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for any thing
 so overdone is from the purpose of playing; whose
 end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold as
 'twere the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own
 feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and
 body of the time, his form and pressure. Now this
 overdone, or come tardy of, tho' it make the unskillful
 laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve: the cen-
 sure of one of which must in your allowance o'erweigh
 a whole theatre of others. Oh, there be players that

I have seen play, and heard others praise and that highly, (not to speak it profanely), that, neither having the accent of Christian, nor the gate of Christian, Pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made them, and not made them well; they imitated humanity so abominably.

Play. I hope we have reform'd that indifferently with us.

Ham. Oh, reform it altogether; and let those that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them: for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous, and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go make you ready. *[Exeunt Players.]*

S C E N E IV.

Enter POLONIUS, ROSINCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my Lord? will the King hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the Players make haste. *[Exit Pol.]*

Will you two help to hasten them?

Bor't. We will, my Lord. *[Exeunt.]*

Ham. What, ho, Horatio!

Enter HORATIO to HAMLET.

Hor. Here, sweet Lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. Oh, my dear Lord,——

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,

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To feed and clothe thee ? Should the poor be flatter'd ?
 No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
 And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee,
 Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?
 Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
 And could of men distinguish, her election
 Hath seal'd thee for herself. For thou hast been
 As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing :
 A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks. And bless'd are those,
 Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,
 That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger,
 To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
 That is not Passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core ; ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee. —Something too much of this. —
 There is a play to-night before the King,
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance
 Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
 I pry'thee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
 Ev'n with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe mine uncle : if his occult guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen ;
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note ;
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face ;
 And, after, we will both our judgments join,
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my Lord.

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
 And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

S C E N E V.

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSINCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and other Lords attendant, with a Guard carrying torches. Danish march. Sound a flourish.

Ham. They're coming to the play; I must be idle. Get you a place.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith, of the cameleon's dish: eat the air, promise-cramm'd: you cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine. — Now, my Lord; you play'd once i' th' university, you say? [*To Polonius.*]

Pol. That I did, my Lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar; I was kill'd i' th' Capitol: Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him, to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my Lord, they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's mettle more attractive.

Pol. Oh, ho! do you mark that?

Ham. Lady, shall I ly in your lap?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

Oph. No, my Lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Oph. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Do you think I meant country-matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my Lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought, to ly between a maid's legs.

Oph. What is, my Lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my Lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my good Lord.

Ham. Oh God! your only jig-maker; what should a man do but be merry? For, look you, how chearfully my mother looks, and my father dy'd within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis two months, my Lord.

Ham. So long? nay, then let the devil wear black, 'fore I'll have a suit of sable. Oh Heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet! then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by'r Lady, he must build churches then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby horse: whose epitaph is, *For oh, for oh, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

S C E N E VI.

Hautboys play. The dumb shew enters.

Enter a Duke and Duchess, with regal coronets, very lovingly; the Duchess embracing him, and he her. She kneels; he takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck; he lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the Duke's ears, and exit. The Duchess returns, finds the Duke dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the Duchess with gifts; she seems loth and unwilling a while, but in the end accepts his love.

[*Exeunt.*

Oph. What means this, my Lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching Malhechor; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play?

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this show meant ?

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll shew him. Be not you ashamed to shew, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught, I'll mark the play.

Prol. *For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posie of a ring ?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my Lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter Duke, and Duchefs, Players.

Duke. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' car gone round
Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground ;
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirty been,
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual, in most sacred bands.

Duch. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done.
But woe is me you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you : yet though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my Lord, it nothing must.
For women fear too much, ev'n as they love.
And women's fear and love hold quantity ;
'Tis either none, or in extremity.
Now what my love is, proof hath made you know ;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.
Where love is great, the smallest doubts are fear ;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

Duke. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too :

My operant powers their functions leave to do,
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd ; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

Duch. Oh, confound the rest !

Such love must needs be treason in my breast :
In second husband let me be accurs'd !
None wed the second, but who kill the first.

Ham. Wormwood, wormwood.——

Duch. The instances that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

Duke. I do believe you think what now you speak ;
But what we do determine, oft we break ;
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity :
Which now, like fruits unripe, sticks on the tree ;
But fall unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt :
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose ;
The violence of either grief or joy,
Their own enactors with themselves destroy.
Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament ;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for ay ; nor 'tis not strange,
That ev'n our loves should with our fortunes change ;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether Love leads Fortune, or else Fortune Love.
The great man down, you mark, his fav'rite lies ;
The poor advanc'd, makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth Love on Fortune tend,
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend ;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run,

That our devices still are overthrown ;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
 Think still, thou wilt no second husband wed ;
 But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead

Duch. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light !
 Sport and repose lock from me day and night !
 To desperation turn my trust and hope !
 An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !
 Each opposite that blanks the face of joy,
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy !
 Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife !
 If, once a widow, e'er I be a wife.

Ham. If the should break it now——

Duke. 'Tis deeply sworn ; sweet, leave me here a while ;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
 The tedious day with sleep.

[*Sleeps.*

Duch. Sleep rock thy brain,

And never come mischance between us twain ! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady protests too much, methinks.

Ham. Oh, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument, is there no offence in't ?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest, no offence i' th' world.

King. What do you call the play ?

Ham. The *Mouse-trap* ;——Marry, how ? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna ; Gonzago is the Duke's name, his wife's Baptista ; you shall see anon 'tis a knavish piece of work ; but what o' that ? your Majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not ; let the gall'd jade winch, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the Duke.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my Lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

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Oph. You are keen, my Lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better and worse.

Ham. So you must take your husbands.

Begin, murderer. — Leave thy damnable faces, and begin

Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Though's black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing ;

Confed'rate season, and no creature seeing :

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's bane thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic, and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[Pours the poison into his ears.]

Ham. He poisons him i' th' garden for's estate ; his name's Gonzago ; the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The King rises.

Ham. What, frightened with false fire !

Queen. How fares my Lord ?

Pol. Give o'er the play

King. Give me some light. Away !

All. Lights, lights, lights !

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E VII.

Manent HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. Whv, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play ;

For some must watch, whilst some must sleep ;

So runs the world away.

Would not this, Sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me), with two provincial roses on my rayed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, Sir ?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, oh Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself, and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock.

Hor. You might have rhim'd.

Ham. Oh, good Horatio, I'll take the Ghost's word
for a thousand pounds. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my Lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

Enter ROSINCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. Oh, ha! come, some music: come, the recorders.

For if the King like not the comedy;

Why, then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music.

Guil. Good my Lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The King, Sir——

Ham. Ay, Sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd—

Ham. With drink, Sir?

Guil. No, my Lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom shall shew itself more rich, to
signify this to his doctor: for, for me to put him to
his purgation, would perhaps plunge him into more
choler.

Guil. Good my Lord, put your discourse into some
frame, and start not so widely from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, Sir;—pronounce

Guil. The Queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my Lord, this courtesy is not of the
right breed. If it shall please you to make me a whole-
some answer, I will do your mother's commandment;

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if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my Lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer: my wit's diseased. But, Sir, such answer as I can make you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother—therefore no more but to the matter——my mother, you say —

Ros. Then, thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into amazement, and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But there is no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration?

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

Ros. My Lord, you did once love me.

Ham. So do I still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my Lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do surely bar the door of your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, but *while the grass grows*——the proverb is something musty.

Enter one, with a Recorder.

Oh, the Recorders; let me see one. To withdraw with you——why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. Oh my Lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My Lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my Lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventiges with your fingers and thumb; give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me; you would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note, to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. Why, do you think that I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.—God bless you, Sir.

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My Lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a *camel*?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a *camel* indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like an *ouzele*.

Pol. It is black like an *ouzele*.

Ham. Or like a *whale*?

Pol. Very like a *whale*.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. By and by is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When church-yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood,

And do such business as the better day
 Would quake to look on. Soft, now to my mother—
 O heart, lose not thy nature ; let not ever
 The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom ;
 Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
 I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
 My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites ;
 How in my words soever she be shent,
 To give them seals never my soul consent ! [Exit.

S C E N E VIII.

Enter KING, ROSINCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
 To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you ;
 I your commission forthwith will dispatch,
 And he to England shall along with you.
 The terms of our estate may not endure
 Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
 Out of his lunacies

Guil. We will provide ourselves ;
 Most holy and religious fear it is,
 To keep these many many bodies safe,
 That live and feed upon your Majesty.

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,
 To keep itself from 'noyance ; but much more,
 That spirit on whose weal depends and rests
 The lives of many. The cease of Majesty
 Dies not alone, but, like a gulph, doth draw
 What's near it with it. 'Tis a massy wheel
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortiz'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls,
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boild'rous ruin. Ne'er alone
 Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage ;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Both. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Gentlemen.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Pol. My Lord, he's going to his mother's closet ;
Behind the arras I'll convey myself
To hear the process ; I'll warrant she'll tax him home.
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother
(Since Nature makes them partial) should o'erhear
The speech, of 'vantage Fare you well, my Liege ;
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

[*Exit.*]

King. Thanks, dear my Lord.
Oh ! my offence is rank, it smells to Heaven ;
It hath the primal, eldest curse upon't ;
A brother's murder.——Pray I cannot :
Though inclination be as sharp as will,
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow ? whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence ?
And what's in prayer, but this twofold force,
To be fore stalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down ? Then I'll look up ;
My fault is past.——But oh, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !——
That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain th' offence ?
In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice ;

And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above.
 There is no shuffling; there the action lies
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,
 Ev'n to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
 Try what repentance can: what can it not?
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
 Oh wretched state! oh bosom black as death!
 Oh limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
 Art more engag'd! Help, angels! make assay!
 Bow, stubborn knees; and heart, with strings of steel,
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
 All may be well. *[The King retires, and kneels.]*

S C E N E IX.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying,
 And now I'll do't—and so he goes to heav'n—
 And so am I reveng'd? that would be scann'd;
 A villain kills my father, and for that
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heav'n—O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread,
 With all his crimes broad blown, flush as May;
 And how his audit stands, who knows, save Heav'n?
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,
 'Tis heavy with him. Am I then reveng'd,
 To take him in the purging of his soul,
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
 Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid bent;
 When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage,
 Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed;
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in't;
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heav'n,
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:

This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

The King rises, and comes forward.

King My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :
Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.

S C E N E X.

Changes to the Queen's Apartment.

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Pol. He will come straight ; look you lay home to him ;
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with ;
And that your Grace hath screen'd, and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll 'sconce me even here ;
Pray you be round with him.

Ham. within.] Mother, mother, mother——

Queen. I'll warrant you, fear me not.
Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides himself behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET.

Ham Now, mother, what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so ;

You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife ;
But ('would you were not so) you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall not
budge :

You go not, till I set you up a glass,
Where you may see the inn'ost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do ? thou wilt not murder me ?
Help, ho !

Act III. PRINCE of DENMARK. 75

Pol. What ho, help. [Behind the arras.]

Ham. How now, a rat? dead for a ducat, dead.

Pol. Oh, I am slain. [Hamlet kills Polonius.]

Queen. Oh me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not: is it the King?

Queen. Oh, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed; almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

Ham. Ay, Lady, 'twas my word.

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell.

[To Polonius.]

I took thee for thy betters; take thy fortune;

Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands; peace, sit you down,

And let me wring your heart, for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

in noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calls virtue hypocrite; takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,

And sets a blister there; makes marriage-vows

As false as dicers' oaths. Oh, such a deed,

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words. Heav'n's face doth glow

O'er this solidity and compound mass

With tristful visage; and, as 'gainst the doom,

Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ah me! what act?

Ham. That roars so loud it thunders to the Indies.—

Look here upon this picture, and on this,

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See what a grace was seated on this brow;

Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;
 A station, like the herald Mercury
 New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
 A combination, and a form indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,
 To give the world assurance of a man.
 This *was* your husband.—Look you now what follows;
 Here *is* your husband, like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten on this moor? ha! have you eyes?
 You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, 'tis humble,
 And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
 Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
 Else could you not have notion: but, sure, that sense
 Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice
 To serve in such a diff'rence.—What devil was't
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman blind?
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling *fans* all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope ———
 O shame! where is thy blush? rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones;
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame,
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more.
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and grained spots,
 As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an incestuous bed,

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Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty——

Queen. Oh, speak no more ;
These words like daggers enter in mine ears.
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer and a villain !
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord. A vice of kings ;——
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket.

Queen. No more.

Enter GHOST.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches——
Save me ! and hover o'er me with your wings,
[*Starting up.*]
You heav'nly guards !——What would your gracious
figure ?

Queen. Alas, he's mad——

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command ?
O say !

Ghost. Do not forget : this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits ;
O step between her and her fighting soul :
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is't with you, Lady ?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you ?
That thus you bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse ?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,
And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
Start up, and stand on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of your distemper

Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!—look you how pale he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable. Do not look on me,
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects; then what I have to do,
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak, this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

[Pointing to the Ghost.]

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look how it steals away!
My father in his habit as he liv'd!

Look where he goes ev'n now, out at the portal.

[Exit Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain,
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. What ecstasy?

My pulse, as your's, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music. 'Tis not madness
That I have utter'd; bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks;
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heav'n;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these purfy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, couth, and woove, for leave to do it good.

Queen. Oh Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to mine uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster Custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habits evil, is angel yet in this;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
And master ev'n the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be blest'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent: but Heav'n hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him; so, again, good night!
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this by no means that I bid you do.
Let the bloat King tempt you again to-bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek: call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to revel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know.
For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gibbe,
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep;

And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England, you know that?

Queen. Alack, I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters seal'd, and my two school-
fellows,

(Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd),

They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery: let it work—

For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer

Hoist with his own petar: and 't shall go hard,

But I will delve one yard below their mines,

And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet,

When in one line two crafts directly meet!

This man shall set me packing;—

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.

Mother, good night.—Indeed this counsellor

Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, Sir, to draw toward an end with you.

Good night, mother. [*Exit Hamlet, tagging in Polonius.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A royal Apartment.

*Enter KING and QUEEN, with ROSINCRANTZ and
GUILDENSTERN.*

KING.

THere's matter in these sighs; these profound heaves
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.

[*To Rosincrantz and Guildenstern, who go out.*]

Ah, my good Lord, what have I seen to-night?

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King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the seas and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier; in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries, A rat!
And in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all,
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man. But so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
E'en on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shews itself pure. He weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away:

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence; and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho! Guildenstern!

Enter ROSINCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him.
Go, seek him out, speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. Pray you, haste in this.

[Exit Rosincrantz and Guildenstern.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. For, haply, slander

(Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to its blank,
Transports its poison'd shot) may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air — O, come away;
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E II.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. Safely stowed. —

Gentlemen within.] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet?

Oh, here they come.

Enter ROSINCRAUNTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my Lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son of a King?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my Lord?

Ham. Ay, Sir, that soaks up the King's countenance,
his rewards, his authorities: but such officers do the
King best service in the end; he keeps them, like an
ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd, to be last
swallow'd: when he needs what you have glean'd, it is
but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my Lord.

Ham. I am glad of it; a knavish speech sleeps in a
foolish ear.

Ros. My Lord, you must tell us where the body is,
and go with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is
not with the body. The King is a thing —

Guil. A thing, my Lord?

Ham. Of nothing: bring me to him; hide fox, and
all after. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

Enter KING.

King. I've sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dang'rous is it, that this man goes loose!
Yet must we not put the strong law on him;
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all inooth,
This sudden sending him away must see a
Deliberate pause: diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.

Enter ROSINCRANTZ.

How now? what hath befall'n?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my Lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my Lord, guarded to know your
pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my Lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten; a
certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.
Your worm is your only Emperor for diet. We fat all
creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for mag-
gots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but vari-
able service, two dishes but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to shew you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heav'n, send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' th' other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till ye come.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, (Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve For that which thou hast done), must send thee hence With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself; The bark is ready, and the wind at help, Th' associates tend, and every thing is bent For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So it is, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them; but come, for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother. Father and Mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh, and so my mother. Come, for England. [Exit.

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard,

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night.

Away, for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on th' affair; pray you make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

And, England! if my love thou hold'st at aught,
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

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After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us; thou may't not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England:
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me; till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin. [Exit.

S C E N E IV.

A Camp on the frontiers of Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS with an army.

For. Go, Captain, from me greet the Danish King;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his realm. You know the rendezvous.
If that his Majesty would aught with us,
We shall expreis our duty in his eye,
And let him know so.

Capt. I will do't, my Lord.

For. Go softly on. [Exit Fortinbras with the army.

*Enter HAMLET, ROSINCRAUNTZ, GUILDEN-
STERN, &c.*

Ham. Good Sir, whose powers are these?

Capt. They are of Norway, Sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, Sir, I pray you?

Capt. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, Sir?

Capt. The nephew of old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, Sir,
Or for some frontier?

Capt. Truly to speak it, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats—five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it,

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw;
This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shews no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, Sir.

Cap. God b' w' ye, Sir.

Ros. Will't please you go, my Lord?

Ham. I'll be with you strait, go a little before. [*Exit.*]

Manet HAMLET.

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To rust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on th' event,
(A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And ever three parts coward), I do not know
Why yet I live to say this thing's to do;
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me;
Witness this army of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Ev'n for an egg-shell. 'Tis not to be great,
Never to stir without great argument;
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
(Excitements of my reason and my blood),
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men;
That for a phantasy and trick of fame

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Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a plot,
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain ? O then, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth ! [*Exit.*]

S C E N E V.

Changes to a Palace.

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, and a GENTLEMAN.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate,
Indeed, distract ; her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have ?

Gent. She speaks much of her father ; says, she hears
There's tricks i' th' world ; and hems, and beats her
heart ;

Spurns enviously at straws ; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection ; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts ;
Which, as her winks and nods and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might be thought ;
Tho' nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may
throw
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.
Let her come in. —

Queen. To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself, in fearing to be spilt.

Enter OPHELIA *distracted.*

Oph. Where is the Beauteous Majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia ?

Oph. *How should I your true love know from another one ?
By his cockle hat and staff, and his sandal shoon.* [*Singing.*]

Queen. Alas, sweet Lady; what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

*He's dead and gone, Lady, he's dead and gone;
At his head a grass green turf, at his heels a stone.*

Enter KING.

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia—

Oph. Pray you, mark.

White the shroud as the mountain-snow.

Queen. Alas, look here, my Lord.

Oph. Larded all with sweet flowers;

Which bewept to the grave did go

With true love showers.

King. How do ye, pretty Lady?

Oph. Well, God yield you! they say, the owl was
a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but
know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Convent upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this; but when
they ask you what it means, say you this:

*To-morrow is St Valentine's day, all in the morn betime,
And I a maid at your window, to be your Valentine.*

*Then up he rose, and don'd his cloaths, and dop'd the
chamber door;*

Let in the maid, that cut a maid never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

By Gis, and by St Charity,

Alack, and fie for shame!

Young men will do't, if they come to't,

By cock, they are to blame.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,

You promis'd me to wed:

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,

And thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long has she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient,
but I cannot chuse but weep to think they should lay
him i' th' cold ground; my brother shall know of it,

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and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach; good night, Ladies; good night, sweet Ladies; good night, good night.

King. Follow her close, give her good watch, I pray you; [Exit Horatio.

This is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude!
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain;
Next your son gone, and he most violent author
Of his own just remove; the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius's death; (we've done but greenly,
In private to inter him); poor Ophelia,
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
(Without the which we're pictures, or meer beasts):
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on this wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our persons to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death! [A noise within,

Queen. Alack! what noise is this?

S C E N E VI.

Enter a MESSENGER.

King. Where are my Switzers? let them guard
the door.

What is the matter?

Mess. Save yourself, my Lord.

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'rbears your officers: the rabble call him Lord;
And as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every ward;
 They cry, Chuse we Laertes for our King.
 Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds;
 Laertes shall be King, Laertes King!

Queen. How chearfully on the false trail they cry!
 Oh, this is counter, you false Danish dogs. [*Noise within.*]

Enter LAERTES, with a party at the door.

King. The doors are broke.

Laer. Where is this King, Sirs? stand you all without.

All. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

All. We will, we will.

[*Exeunt.*]

Laer. I thank you, keep the door.

O thou vile King, give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm, proclaims me
 bastard;

Cries cuckold to my father; brands the harlot
 Even here, between the chaste and unsmirch'd brow
 Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
 That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
 Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;
 There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
 That treason can but peep to what it would,
 And little of its will. Tell me, Laertes,
 Why are you thus incens'd? Let him go, Gertrude.
 Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
 To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
 Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
 I dare damnation; to this point I stand,
 That both the worlds I give to negligence,
 Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
 Most thoroughly for my father.

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King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world:

And for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father, is't writ in your revenge,
That, sweep-stake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak

Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce,
As day does to your eye. [*A noise within, "Let her
come in."*]

Laer. How now, what noise is that?

S C E N E VII.

*Enter OPHELIA, fantastically dress'd with straws and
flowers*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears, seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By Heav'n, thy madness shall be paid with weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heav'ns, is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life!
Nature is fine in love; and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Oph. They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier,
And on his grave rain'd many a tear;
Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Oph. You must sing, down a-down, and you call him
a-down-a. O how the wheel becomes it! it is the false
steward that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
pray, love, remember; and there's pansies, that's for
thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remem-
brance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines; there's
rue for you, and here's some for me. We may call it
herb of grace o' Sundays: you may wear your rue with
a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you some
violets, but they withered all when my father dy'd:
they say, he made a good end;

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?*

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead, go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

All flaxen was his pole:

He is gone, he is gone, and we cast away moan.

Gramercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls: God b' w' ye. [*Exit Ophelia.*]

Laer. Do you see this, you gods!

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right: go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction. But if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul,
To give it due content.

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Laer. Let this be so.

His means of death, his obscure funeral,
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heav'n to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall:

And where th' offence is, let the great tax fall.

I pray you go with me.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VIII.

Enter HORATIO, with an Attendant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Ser. Sailors, Sir; they say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in.

[*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter SAILORS.

Sail. God bless you, Sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

Sail. He shall, Sir, an't please him. — There's a letter for you, Sir: it comes from th' ambassador that was bound for England, if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Horatio reads the letter.

Horatio, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the King: they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did: I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thy ear will make thee dumb, yet are they much too light for the matter. These good fellows

will bring thee where I am. Rosincrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England. Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [Exit.]

S C E N E IX.

Enter KING and LAERTES.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain,
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up?

King. Two special reasons,
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsnew'd,
And yet to me are strong. The Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
(My virtue or my plague, be't either which),
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces. So that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so low a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,

Act IV. PRINCE of DENMARK. 95

Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections--But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that, you must not think,

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime. You shall soon hear more.
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself.
And that I hope will teach you to imagine——
How now? what news?

Enter MESSENGER.

Mes. Letters, my Lord, from Hamlet,
These to your Majesty: this to the Queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mes. Sailors, my Lord, they say; I saw them not;
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them.

King. Laertes, thou shalt hear them: leave us, all—
[*Exit Mes.*

*High and Mighty, You shall know I am set naked on
your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your
kingly eyes. When I shall, (first asking your pardon
thereunto,) recount th' occasion of my sudden return.*

HAMLET.

What should this mean? are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse—and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character;
Naked, and (in a postscript here) he says,
Alone: can you advise me?

Laer. I'm lost in it, my Lord: but let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so?—how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay; so you'll not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,

As liking not his voyage, and that he means
 No more to undertake it; I will work him
 To an exploit now ripe in my device,
 Under the which he shall not chuse but fall:
 And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
 But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
 And call it accident.

Laer. I will be rul'd,
 The rather if you could devise it so,
 That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right:
 You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
 And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
 Wherein they say you shine; your sum of parts
 Did not together pluck such envy from him,
 As did that one, and that in my regard
 Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my Lord?

King. A very feather in the cap of youth,
 Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
 The light and careless livery that it wears,
 Than settled age his fables, and his weeds
 Importing wealth and graveness — Two months since,
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy;
 I've seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
 And they can well on horseback; but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't: he grew unto his seat;
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorp'd and demy-natur'd
 With the brave beast; so far he top'd my thought,
 That I in forgery of shapes and tricks
 Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The same.

Laer. I know him well; he is the brooch, indeed,
 And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you,
 And gave you such a masterly report,

For art and exercise in your defence ;
 And for your rapier most especial,
 That he cry'd out, 'Twould be a sight indeed,
 If one could match you. The scrimers of their nation,
 He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
 If you oppos'd 'em. — Sir, this report of his
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
 That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
 Your sudden coming o'er to play with him.
 Now out of this —

Laer. What out of this, my Lord ?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you ?
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
 A face without a heart ?

Laer. Why ask you this ?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
 But that I know love is begun by time ;
 And that I see in passages of proof,
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it :
 There lives within the very flame of love
 A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it,
 And nothing is at a like goodness still :
 For goodness growing to a pleurisy,
 Dies in his own too much ; what wé would do,
 We should do when we would, for this *would* changes,
 And hath abatements and delays as many
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents ;
 And then this *should* is like a spendthrift's sigh
 That hurts by easing. But to the quick o' th' ulcer —
 Hamlet comes back ; what would you undertake
 To shew yourself your father's son indeed
 More than in words ?

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' church.

King. No place indeed should murder sanctuarise ;
 Revenge should have no bounds ; but, good Laertes,
 Will you do this ? keep close within your chamber ;
 Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home :
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
 And set a double varnish on the fame
 The Frenchman gave you ; bring you in fine together,

And wager on your heads. He being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may chuse
A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't;

And for the purpose I'll anoint my sword:
I bought an unktion of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal; I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's farther think of this;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit it to our shape. If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad performance,
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project
Should have a back or second that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft—let me see—
We'll make a solemn wager on your connings;
I ha't—when in your motion you are hot,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end),
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping
If he by chance escape your venom'd tuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

S C E N E X.

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet Queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! oh, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,

ACT V. PRINCE of DENMARK. 99

That shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream :
 There with fantastic garlands did she come,
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name to ;
 (But our cold maids do dead mens' fingers call them)
 There on the pendant boughs, her coronet weeds
 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliker broke ;
 When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook ; her clothes spread wide,
 And mermaid-like, a while they bore her up ;
 Which time she chaunted snatches of old tunes,
 As one incapable of her own distress ;
 Or like a creature native and endued
 Unto that element : but long it could not be,
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

Laer. Alas then, she is drown'd !

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
 And therefore I forbid my tears ; but yet
 It is our trick ; Nature her custom holds,
 Let Shame say what it will ; when these are gone,
 The woman will be out. Adieu, my Lord !
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly drowns it.

[*Exit.*]

King. Follow, Gertrude :
 How much had I to do to calm his rage !
 Now fear I this will give it start again ;
 Therefore let's follow.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Church.

Enter two CLOWNS, with spades and mattocks.

1 CLOWN.

Is she to be buried in Christian burial, that wilfully
 seeks her own salvation ?

I 2

2 *Clown*. I tell thee she is, therefore make her grave straight; the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1 *Clown*. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clown*. Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clown*. It must be *se offendendo*, it cannot be else. For here lyes the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act; and an act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform; *argal*, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 *Clown*. Nay, but hear you, goodman Delver.

1 *Clown*. Give me leave; here lyes the water, good; here stands the man, good: if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself. *Argal*, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clown*. But is this law?

1 *Clown*. Ay, marry is't, crowner's quest law.

2 *Clown*. Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of Christian burial.

1 *Clown*. Why, there thou say'st. And the more pity, that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade; there is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clown*. Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clown*. He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clown*. Why, he had none.

1 *Clown*. What, art a Heathen? how dost thou understand the scripture? the scripture says Adam digg'd; could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee; if thou answerest me to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clown*. Go to.

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1 *Clown*. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clown*. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clown*. I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well; but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; *argal*, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2 *Clown*. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clown*. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *Clown*. Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clown*. To't.

2 *Clown*. Mafs, I cannot tell.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance.

1 *Clown*. Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and when you are ask'd this question next, say a grave-maker. The houses he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Youghan, and fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[Exit 2 Clown.]

He digs, and sings.

In youth when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet;

To contract oh, the time for, a, my behove,

Oh, methought there was nothing so meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it to him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so; the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

Clown sings.

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath claw'd me in his clutch:

And hath shipped me into his land,

As if I had never been such.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowles it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass o'er-offices; one that would circumvent God: might it not?

Hor. It might, my Lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say, "Good morrow, sweet Lord; how dost thou, good Lord?" This might be my Lord such a one, that prais'd my Lord such a one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my Lord.

Ham. Why, ev'n so: and now my Lady Worm's, chapless, and knock'd about the muzzard with a sexton's spade. Here's a fine revolution, if we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? mine ake to think on't.

Clown sings.

A pick-axe and a spade, a spade.

For,—and a shrouding sheet!

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Ham. There's another: why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? where be his quiddits now? his quillets? his cases? his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! this fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognisances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? the very conveyances of his lands will hardly ly in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my Lord.

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Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my Lord, and of calves-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves that seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave is this, firrah?

Clown. Mine, Sir——

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine indeed, for thou ly'st in't.

Clown. You ly out on't, Sir, and therefore it is not yours; for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say, 'tis thine: 'tis for the dead, and not for the quick, therefore thou liest.

Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, Sir, 'twill away again from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

Clown. For no man, Sir.

Ham. What woman then?

Clown. For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

Clown. One that was a woman, Sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it, the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of our courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a gravemaker?

Clown. Of all the days i' th' year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was that very day that young Hamlet was born, he that was mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

Clown. Why, because he was mad; he shall recover his wits there; or, if he does not, 'tis no great matter there,

Ham. Why?

Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

Clown. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

Clown. Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man ly i' th' earth ere he rot?

Clown. I'faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corfes now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in), he will last you some eight year, or nine year; a tanner will last you nine years.

Ham. Why he more than another?

Clown. Why, Sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while. And your water is a fore decay'er of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

Clown. A whoreson mad fellow's it was; whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he pour'd a flaggon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, Sir, was Yorick's scull, the King's jester.

Ham. This?

Clown. E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now; your gambols; your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar? not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my Lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch

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thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my Lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? puh! [Smelling to the skull.

Hor. E'en so, my Lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot: but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
Oh that that earth which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft a while—here comes the King,

S C E N E II.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, and a coffin, with Lords, and Priests attendant.

The Queen, the courtiers. What is that they follow,
And with such mained rites? this doth betoken,
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Foredo its own life; 'twas of some estate.
Couch we a while, and mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a most noble youth: mark—

Laer. What ceremony else?

Priest. Her obsequies have been so far enlarg'd
As we have warranty; her death was doubtful:
And but that great command o'erflows the order,

She should in ground un sanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trump; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her:
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin chants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must no more be done!

Priest. No more be done!

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *Requiem*, and such rest to her
As to peace parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' th' earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou lyest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet, farewell!

I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not to have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of! Hold off the earth a while,
Till I have caught her once more in my arms:

[*Laertes leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
T' o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. discovering himself. What is he whose griefs
Bear such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,

[*Hamlet leaps into the grave.*]

Hamlet the Dane.

Laer. The devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*]

Ham. I thou pray't not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat—

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For though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wildom fear. Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them afunder——

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet——

Hor. Good my Lord, be quiet.

[The attendants part them.]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eye-lids will no longer wag.

Queen. Oh my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God forbear him.

Ham. Come, flew me what thou'lt do.

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

Woo't drink up eisel, eat a crocodile?

I'll do't.—Dost thou come hither but to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

Be buried quick with her; and so will I;

And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,

Singeing his pate against the burning sun,

Make Ossa like a wart! nay, an' thou'lt mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is meer madness;

And thus a while the fit will work on him:

Anon as patient as the female dove,

Ere that her golden couplets are disclos'd,

His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, Sir——

What is the reason that you use me thus?

I lov'd you ever; but it is no matter——

Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew, the dog will have his day. *[Exit.]*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[Exit Hor.]

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech.

[To Laertes.]

We'll put the matter to the present push.
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
 This grave shall have a living monument.
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
 Till then in patience our proceeding be. [Exeunt.

S C E N E III.

Changes to a Hall in the palace.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Ham. So much for this, now shall you see the other.
 You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my Lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
 That would not let me sleep; methought I lay
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes; rashness
 (And prais'd be rashness for it) lets us know
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
 When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us,
 There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
 Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
 My sea-grown scarft about me, in the dark
 Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire,
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
 To mine own room again; making so bold
 (My fears forgetting manners) to unseal
 Their grand commission, where I found, Horatio,
 A royal knavery; an exact command,
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
 Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
 With, ho! such buggs and goblins in my life;
 That on the supervise, no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the ax,
 My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission, read it at more leisure;
 But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you,

Act V. PRINCE of DENMARK. 109

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villains,
(Ere I could mark the prologue to my bane,
They had begun the play), I fat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair :
(I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair ; and labour'd much
How to forget that learning ; but, Sir, now
It did me yeoman's service) : wilt thou know
Th' effect of what I wrote ?

Hor. Ay, my good Lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them, like the palm, might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a commerce 'tween their amities ;
And many such like *as's* of great charge ;
That on the view and knowing these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not thriving-time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd ?

Ham. Why, ev'n in that was Heaven ordinant :
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal :
I folded the writ up in form of th' other,
Subscrib'd it, gave th' impression, plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent,
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So, Guildenstern and Rosincrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this employment.——

They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
Doth by their own insinuation grow.

'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pals and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a King is this ?

Ham. Does it not, think'st thou, stand me now upon ?
He that kill'd my King, and whor'd my mother,

110 H A M L E T, A&V.

Popt in between th' election and my hopes,
 Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
 And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
 To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
 To let this cankar of our nature come
 In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
 What is the issue of the business there.

Ham It will be short.

The *interim's* mine: and a man's life's no more
 Than to say, one.

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
 That to Laertes I forgot myself;
 For by the image of my cause I see
 The portraiture of his; I'll court his favour:
 But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
 Into a tow'ring passion.

Hor. Peace, who comes here?

S C E N E IV.

Enter OSRICK.

Ofr. Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, Sir. Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good Lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice
 to know him: he hath much land, and fertile; let a
 beast be Lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the
 King's mess; 'tis a clough; but, as I say, spacious in
 the possession of dirt.

Ofr. Sweet Lord, if your Lordship were at leisure, I
 should impart a thing to you from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it with all diligence of spirit:
 your bonnet to its right use,—'tis for the head.

Ofr. I thank your Lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold: the wind is
 northerly.

Ofr. It is indifferent cold, my Lord, indeed.

Act V. PRINCE of DENMARK. III

Ham. But yet methinks it is very sultry, and hot, or my complexion——

Ofr. Exceedingly, my Lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere, I cannot tell how.— My Lord, his Majesty bid me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter——

Ham. I beseech you, remember——

Ofr. Nay, in good faith, for mine ease, in good faith.—Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes; believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great shew: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or kalendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his refinement suffers no perdition in you; tho' I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; and yet but slow neither in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article; and his infusion of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else would trace him, his unbrage, nothing more.

Ofr. Your Lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, Sir?—Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath? [*To Horatio.*

Ofr. Sir,——

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? you will do't, Sir, rarely

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Ofr. Of Laertes

Hor. His purse is empty already: all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, Sir.

Ofr. I know you are not ignorant,——

Ham. I would you did, Sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much improve me——Well, Sir.

Ofr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is.

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I shou'd compare

with him in excellence : but to know a man well, were to know himself.

Ofr. I mean, Sir, for his weapon : but in the imputation laid on him by them in his meed, he's unfellow'd.

Ham. What's his weapon ?

Ofr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons ; but well.

Ofr. The King, Sir, has wag'd with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has impon'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so : three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages ?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent, ere you had done. [Aside.]

Ofr. The carriages, Sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more germane to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides ; I would it might be hangers till then. But, on ; six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages ; that's the French bet against the Danish ; why is this impon'd, as you call it ?

Ofr. The King, Sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between you and him, he shall not exceed you three hits ; he hath laid on twelve for nine ; and it would come to immediate trial, if your Lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer no ?

Ofr. I mean, my Lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall ; if it please his Majesty, 'tis the breathing-time of day with me ; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can ; if not, I'll gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Ofr. Shall I deliver you so ?

Ham. To this effect, Sir, after what flourish your nature will.

ACT V. PRINCE of DENMARK. 113

Ofr. I commend my duty to your Lordship. [*Exit.*]

Ham. Yours, yours; he does well to commend it himself, there are no tongues else for's turn

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham. He did compliment with his dug before he suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed, that I know the drossy age doats on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter, a-kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fann'd and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trials, the bubbles are out.

Enter a LORD.

Lord. My Lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Ofrick; who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time?

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the King's pleasure; if his fitness speaks, mine is ready, now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The King and Queen, and all, are coming down

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You shall lose this wager, my Lord

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice, I shall win at odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart, — but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, my good Lord.

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither, and say you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special

providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now: if it be not now, yet it will come; the readiness is all. Since no man, if ought he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes? Let it be.

S C E N E V.

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, and Lords, OSRICK, with other Attendants with foils and gauntlets. A table with flaggons of wine on it.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me. *[Gives him the hand of Laertes.]*

Ham. Give me your pardon, Sir; I've done you wrong; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman. This presence knows, and you must needs have heard, How I am punish'd with a sore distraction. What I have done, That might your nature, honour, and exception, Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness: Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? never, Hamlet. If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes, Then Hamlet does it not; Hamlet denies it. Who does it then? his madness. If't be so, Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd; His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy. Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil, Free me so far in your most generous thoughts, That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house, And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature, Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most To my revenge: but in my terms of honour I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation; Till by some elder masters of known honour I have a voice, and president of peace, To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time, I do receive your offer'd love like love, And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely,

Act V. PRINCE of DENMARK. 115

And will this brother's wager frankly play.

Give us the foils.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkeſt night,
Stick fiery off, indeed.

Laer. You mock me, Sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Ofrick.
Hamlet, you know the wager.

Ham. Well, my Lord;
Your Grace hath laid the odds o' th' weaker ſide.

King. I do not fear it, I have ſeen you both:
But ſince he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me ſee another.

Ham. This likes me well; theſe foils have all a
length

[*Prepares to play.*]

Ofr. Ay, my good Lord.

King. Set me the ſtoops of wine upon that table:
If *Hamlet* gives the firſt or ſecond hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King ſhall drink to *Hamlet's* better breath:
And in the cup an union ſhall he throw,
Richer than that which four ſucceſſive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups:
And let the kettle to the trumpets ſpeak,
The trumpets to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heav'ns, the heav'ns to earth:
Now the King drinks to *Hamlet*.—Come, begin,
And you the judges bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, Sir.

Laer. Come, my Lord.

[*They play.*]

Ham. One—

Laer. No—

Ham. Judgment.

Ofr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well—again—

King. Stay, give me drink. *Hamlet*, this pearl is
thine,

Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound, shot goes off.*]

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by a while.

[*They play.*]

Come——another hit——what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Ham. Good Madam——

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my Lord; I pray you pardon me.

[*Drinks.*]

King. It is the poison'd cup, it is too late. [Aside.]

Ham. I dare not drink yet, Madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[Aside.]

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes, you but dally;
I pray you pass with your best violence;
I am afraid you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? come on.

[Play.]

Ofr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*]

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again——

Ofr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is't, my Lord?

Ofr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe, Ofrick,
I'm justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink——

Oh my dear Hamlet, the drink, the drink,——

I am poison'd——

[*Queen dies.*]

ACT V. PRINCE of DENMARK. 117

Ham. Oh villainy! ho! let the door be lock'd;
Treachery! seek it out—

Laer. It is here. Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good.
In thee there is not half an hour of life;
The treach'rous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and invenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I ly,
Never to rise again; thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more—the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point invenom'd too?
Then, venom, do thy work. *[Stabs the King.]*

All. Treason, treason.

King. O yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murth'rous, damned
Dane,
Drink off this potion: is the union here?
Follow my mother. *[King dies.]*

Laer. He is justly serv'd.
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet;
Mine and my father's death come not on thee,
Nor thine on me! *[Dies.]*

Ham. Heav'n make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I'm dead, Horatio; wretched Queen, adieu!
You that look pale, and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time, (as this fell serjeant Death
Is strict in his arrest), oh, I could tell you—
But let it be—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st, report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it.
I'm more an antic Roman than a Dane;
Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As th' art a man,
Give me the cup; let go; by Heav'n I'll have it.
Oh good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me?
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity a while,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
 To tell my tale. [*March afar off, and shout within.*
 What warlike noise is this?

S C E N E VI.

Enter OSRICK.

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
 Poland,
 To the ambassadors of England gives
 This warlike volley.

Ham. O I die, Horatio:
 The potent poison quite o'ergrows my spirit;
 I cannot live to hear the news from England.
 But I do prophesy, th' election lights
 On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
 So tell him, with the occurrents more or less,
 Which have solicited.—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart! good night, sweet
 Prince;

And flights of angels wing thee to thy rest!
 Why does the drum come hither?

*Enter FORTINBRAS and English Ambassadors, with
 drum, colours, and attendants.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it you would see?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

For. This quarry cries—on havoc. Oh proud Death!
 What feast is toward in thy infernal cell,
 That thou so many princes at a shot
 So bloodily hast struck?

Amb. The sight is dismal,
 And our affairs from England come too late:
 The ears are senseless that should give us hearing;
 To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
 That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
 Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,

Had it th' ability of life to thank you :
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd ; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view,
And let me speak to th' yet unknowing world,
How these things came about. So shall you hear
Of cruel, bloody, and unnatural acts ;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;
Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause ;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook,
Fall'n on th' inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblesse to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim, my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more :
But let this fame be presently perform'd,
Even while mens minds are wild, lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally. And for his passage,
The soldiers' music, and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him——
Take up the body : such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shews much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[Exeunt marching : after which a peal of
ordnance is shot off*.]*

* If the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are

interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations, and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life, and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth; the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole play, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of *the play*, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet has no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily have been formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having paid little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is alayed by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young and beautiful, the harmless, and the pious. *Johnson.*



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